

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**Draft United States - Mexico  
Environmental Program: Border 2025  
Framework Document**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*As a result of the partnership among U.S. Border Tribes and federal, state and local governments in the United States and Mexico, the mission of the Border 2025 program is to:*  
**Protect the environment and public health in the U.S.-Mexico border region consistent with the principles of sustainable development.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> In this program, sustainable development is defined as “conservation-oriented social and economic development that emphasizes the protection and sustainable use of resources while addressing both current and future needs and present and future impacts of human actions.”

# BORDER 2025 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following Guiding Principles will support the mission statement, ensure consistency among all aspects of the Border 2025 Program and continue successful elements of previous binational environmental programs. These Guiding Principles are intended to guide the activities developed within the framework of this Program, to promote leveraging of other initiatives that have similar objectives and to promote work that contributes to the environmental health and well-being of the comprehensive U.S.-Mexico border population.

- Preserve and restore the natural environment and **reduce the highest public health risks**.
- **Embrace a bottom-up approach** for prioritizing areas of engagement through partnerships with local, state, U.S. federally recognized tribal governments and Mexico's indigenous communities.
- **Address disproportionate environmental impacts** in border communities by protecting and improving children's health and promoting environmental awareness and environmental health.
- **Ensure** broad-based representation from environmental, public and environmental health, and other relevant sectors.
- **Foster transparency, public participation, and open dialogue** through provision of accessible, accurate, and timely information.
- **Promote sustainable communities** through capacity building focused on the knowledge of environmental and public health issues related to the environment, and management of solutions.
- **Promote criteria and instruments that ensure the optimal protection, conservation and use of natural resources**, thus forming a comprehensive environmental policy that allows the continuous sustainable communities by improving social, economic, and environmental systems models in the border region.
- **Achieve concrete, measurable and sustainable results** while maintaining a long-term vision.
- Recognize that one of the best ways to achieve **sustainable economic development** of the border region is through cooperation and a common vision.
- **Promote effective compliance and enforcement** and cooperate closely in regulation and/or policy development.

- Address tribal and indigenous peoples: **The United States recognizes that Tribal Governments of Federally** recognized tribes are sovereign entities, and the equity issues affecting the reservation environments of those tribal governments must be addressed in the United States on a government- to-government basis. **Mexico recognizes** its indigenous peoples as an original population, defenders of collective memory and cultural heritage; therefore, appropriate measures will be considered to address their specific concerns under the program, and their integration within the broader environmental purposes of this program will be sought, as well as to protect and preserve their cultural integrity within the broader environmental purposes of this program

## INTRODUCTION

The U.S.-Mexico Environmental Program: Border 2025 is a five-year (2020-2025) binational effort designed “to protect the environment and public health in the U.S.-Mexico border region, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.” Its implementation will be accomplished within the framework of the respective laws and regulation of the U.S. and Mexico.

Border 2025 is the latest cooperative effort implemented under the 1983 La Paz Agreement. It builds on previous binational efforts and established guiding principles that will support the mission statement, ensure consistency among all aspects of the Border 2025 Program, and continue successful elements of previous binational environmental programs.

Border 2025 includes four strategic goals to address environmental and public health challenges in the border region. Within the goals are specific objectives that identify actions that will be taken in support of the programs mission. The goals and objectives were agreed upon binationally between the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico (SEMARNAT) to address ongoing environmental challenges, which considered input from state and tribal partners.

The Border 2025 strategic goals are:

Goal 1: Reduce Air Pollution

Goal 2: Improve Water Quality

Goal 3: Promote Sustainable Materials and Waste Management, and Clean Sites

Goal 4: Improve Joint Preparedness for and Response to Hazardous Environmental Emergencies

In order to ensure effective program implementation, the U.S. EPA and Mexico’s SEMARNAT, will provide guidance and oversight to Border 2025 coordinating bodies: Policy Fora, Regional Coordinators, and Task Forces. *Policy Fora* will provide borderwide technical and policy support on issues and will engage with Regional Coordinators as they oversee and manage the accomplishment of the Goals. *Regional Coordinators*, through direct engagement with *Task Forces*, will oversee projects and efforts in the four geographic regions of the border: California-Baja California, Arizona-Sonora, New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua and Texas-Coahuila- Nuevo León-Tamaulipas. Border 2025 aims to improve environmental conditions in underserved communities and sensitive populations by fulfilling its four goals and associated objectives. Border 2025 also aims to provide stakeholders timely access to environmental information and will continue to promote training and capacity building that focuses on environmental and programmatic sustainability within border communities.

To enhance public participation and transparency, Border 2025 will share progress through newsletters, project-specific fact sheets, a mid-term progress report and a final accomplishment report. To track progress, two consecutive sets of action plans will capture projects and actions to accomplish the goals and objectives based on available resources and regional and community priorities.

## BACKGROUND

The border area between Mexico and the United States is usually seen as a very vibrant area compared to the rest of the respective countries. The combination of countless political and social issues at the national level and the inherent obligations arising from the Good Neighbor Policy create a region that is extremely complex for its administration. However, it is those same factors that make the border-zone rich in culture, full of business opportunities and ecosystems.

The shared border covers almost 2,000 miles (3,100 kilometers) from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean and 62.15 miles (100 km) on each side of the international border, where two biogeographic regions converge that determine the presence of a great diversity of organisms and ecosystems, which is why both nations are part of the 17 countries considered as mega-diverse, globally<sup>2</sup>.

In terms of demographics, the border region is home to more than 15.2 million people with about 8 million living in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau 2017 estimates) and more than 7 million living in Mexico's Border Municipalities (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía-INEGI, 2015 estimate). It is estimated that about 90% of this population resides in the 15 pairs of sister cities distributed along the border. In the United States there are 26 Native-American tribes recognized at the federal level, many of whom share extensive cultural and family ties with the seven indigenous peoples recognized by the Mexican government in their territory. Both Mexico and the United States of America are conducting the 2020 Census that the two Countries implement every 10 years, and at that time we will know actual Border Region population, instead of the estimated of 15.2 million people.

Population growth indexes show a clear trend of increasing growth in both countries, related among other factors to the influx of migrants from different regions, that end up staying indefinitely in the region. This situation, together with already existing factors, has increased the pressure on basic infrastructure and services of these border cities, which cannot keep up with this population growth. At the same time, the natural resources of the region are over-exploited, which significantly affect the sustainability of the area and negatively impacts public health.

### **Continuity of the historical cooperation process**

Mexico and the United States are aware of the complexity and challenge when promoting the sustainability of the shared region and have historically collaborated through legal frameworks that establish common goals and rules of cooperation. The establishment of binational organizations structured in a solid manner ensures dialogue and coordination on key issues. Despite this complexity, bilateral cooperation between the two countries serve as an example of best practices to be followed in other global areas.

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<sup>2</sup> Cantú, César et al. *Las ecorregiones de la frontera norte de México*. INECC. Publicaciones Electrónicas.



The basic framework for binational cooperation began in 1983 in the city of La Paz, Baja California, where both Countries recognized the need to address environmental and health challenges by signing the Agreement on Cooperation for the Protection and Improvement of the Environment in the Border Area, commonly referred to as the La Paz Agreement. The U.S. EPA and SEMARNAT were charged with carrying out activities in accordance with the Agreement.

The program has evolved over time to accommodate changing border priorities. The successive environmental programs, which originated with the La Paz Agreement, have led to joint actions between both governments and strengthened investments in order to increase the positive impacts to the environment and public health. The implementation of the La Paz Agreement has been carried out through four programs of environmental cooperation:

**1) Integrated Environmental Plan for the Mexican-U.S. Border Area (IBEP)**

The IBEP established in 1992 was the first program implemented under the framework of the La Paz Agreement to address the most serious environmental challenges in the border region. The IBEP envisioned an integrated approach to address border environmental issues based on four objectives: to monitor media specific and pollution control activities in the Border area, including the performance of baseline and periodic environmental health risk assessments; to strengthen environmental regulatory activities in the Border region through new cooperative programs and projects that complement the La Paz Agreement; to mobilize additional resources for pollution prevention and control in the Border area; and to supplement pollution control programs through pollution prevention and voluntary action programs.

Following the Specific Implementation Plans derived from the IBEP (1992-1994), the environmental authorities of Mexico and the United States implemented efforts in the following areas:

- A) Cooperative Enforcement Strategy; Industrial Multimedia Source Controls Requiring Government and Private Sector Initiatives;
- B) Protection of Water Quality/Conservation of Water Resources;
- C) Border Wastewater Control;
- D) Air Quality; Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste;
- E) Municipal Solid Waste; Pesticides;
- F) Contingency Planning/Emergency Response;
- G) Regulation of Activities Impacting the Environment;
- H) Pollution Prevention; Environmental Education;
- I) Conservation of Natural Resources; and
- J) Urban Development

**2) Border XXI Program**

The Border XXI was a five-year bilateral effort to bring together government institutions responsible for the border environment. Unlike IBEP, Border XXI brought additional federal partners to achieve its environmental goals and welcomed the U.S. and Mexican States, as well as Federally recognized tribes in the U.S. into the workgroups.

After extensive public participation along the U.S.-Mexico border, the Border XXI Program added three working groups (environmental information, natural resources and environmental health) to those already established by the La Paz Agreement (water, air, solid and hazardous waste, pollution prevention, planning and response to emergencies, and environmental law enforcement to promote sustainable development in the region, protection of human health and the environment, and proper management of shared natural resources).

Border XXI made significant contributions to the prevention of pollution and enhancement of sustainable development principles. Accomplishments of the program included the creation of the U.S.-Mexico Consultative Mechanism to share information on hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities; the development of institutional infrastructure and expertise on air quality through technical assistance, training, and information and technology transfer; the development of pollution prevention manuals for the textile, wood finishing, metals and electronics industries; the construction of drinking water and wastewater infrastructure; and the development of sister city emergency response agreements for six border cities. Border XXI further complemented its efforts to prevent pollution through formal and informal training, education sessions, workshops, and the production and distribution of a training video titled "Environmental Auditing and Pollution Prevention: Strategies for Compliance in the Maquiladora Industry."

The successes of the IBEP and the Border XXI Program supported the continued investment in environmental issues as a priority in the bilateral agenda between the United States and Mexico. Just as Border XXI improved upon the IBEP, Border XXI served as the foundation for the establishment of the U.S.-Mexico Environmental Program: Border 2012.

### **3) United States-Mexico Environmental Program: Border 2012**

Between 2002 and 2003, the Border 2012 Program was negotiated and initiated with the active participation of 10 border states, 26 federally recognized tribes in the U.S. border region, the U.S. EPA, SEMARNAT, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Mexican Secretariat of Health.

Border 2012, a ten-year program, emphasized a regional bottom-up approach incorporating local decision-making, priority setting, and project implementation as the basis for addressing environmental issues in the border region. The Border 2012 Program brought together a wide range of stakeholders to generate sustained actions that met the environmental needs of the various border communities.

The Border 2012 Program also incorporated a significant participation process in which representatives from industry, non-governmental organizations, academia, state and local governments, federal agencies and the general public could contribute their ideas and recommendations. The adoption of this inclusive approach allowed Border 2012 to more effectively address environmental and health problems in the border region.

Under this Program, water quality and environmental health in the U.S.-Mexico border region were significantly improved. The binational cooperation led to the completion of infrastructure projects that benefited more than 7 million residents. These projects provided greater access to safe drinking water and wastewater treatment. Air quality and the public's understanding of air pollution impacts were significantly improved through efforts that supported implementation of diesel truck/bus retrofitting programs and road paving projects. As well, the establishment of air monitoring networks and increased accessibility to ambient air quality data contributed to public awareness and advocacy for the attainment of the United States' National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Reduced land contamination was achieved through clean-up, proper disposal and improved waste management of used electronics and more than 14 million scrap tires, and clean-up and revitalization of hazardous waste sites. Progress in joint readiness for environmental response in the U.S.-Mexico Border area was enhanced through training and knowledge/equipment exchanges that allowed local responders to prepare for border incidents.

Finally, Border 2012 supported community health workers (Promotores) to educate underserved communities about potential environmental health risks associated with exposure to chemicals and pesticides. Additional efforts to improve environmental health resulted in the removal of obsolete agricultural pesticides and projects to remove mercury waste from hospitals in the border region.

#### **4) Border 2020: United States-Mexico Environmental Program**

The successful implementation of the Border 2012 Program was recognized in the development of Border 2020 with the retention of the same structure and mechanisms for the new program. In August 2012, the Border 2020 Environmental Program began and represented the continuity of a binational effort that aims to address the challenges facing the border region in terms of environment and public health.

Similar to the previous program, the Border 2020 Program identified five long-term goals and set specific objectives for each goal. They were carefully defined through consultation with stakeholders and strategic partners in the border region and considered the environmental problems pending solution. Biennial Action Plans were developed that established priorities and implemented strategies to achieve the goals and objectives of the Program by optimizing financial resources, emerging problems and the particular needs of a community or geographic area. The five goals were to reduce air pollution; improve access to clean and safe water; promote material management and waste management, and clean sites; improve joint preparation for environmental response; and strengthen compliance with the law and promote responsible environmental management.

An evolution from the Border 2012 Program, the Border 2020 Program established six fundamental strategies that complemented efforts to fulfill the mission: work to improve children's health; build capacity to address climate change; protect marginalized communities; strengthen the environmental culture; promote environmental health; and strengthen state, federal, tribal and international collaboration.

Under the Border 2020 Program, it is worth noting that the increase of drinking water, sewerage and sanitation services in the border region reached a level far above the national average. This is a reflection of the successful cooperation that this and the previous programs represent. Other successes included the elimination of up to 2 million tires annually along the New Mexico – Texas border. These tires would have otherwise been spread at clandestine and collection sites near landfills. Scrap tire management was made possible by considering scrap tires as a resource and not as a waste which invited public-private partnerships for final disposal at cement plants for energy cogeneration. Also, thanks to the Border 2020 Program, there is an operational air quality monitoring network in sister cities, and all border states have mechanisms to measure and improve air quality. Further, the Border 2020 Program promoted capacity development actions in the region on issues such as improvements in rainwater harvesting and proper disposal of oil and grease waste, collection and treatment of electronic waste, recycling, and joint emergency response training for law enforcement to improve understanding of the requirements for industries in both countries.

Under the Border 2020 Program from 2013 to 2019, the U.S. EPA funded 117 projects, 63 in Mexico and 54 in the United States. These projects promoted solutions or monitoring related to air quality, used tire management, environmental health promotion, response to environmental emergencies and treatment of wastewater. These projects represent an investment of more than \$5.7 million dollars in border communities.

### **Looking Forward**

To continue this outstanding binational effort, the U.S. EPA and SEMARNAT formalized this **United States-Mexico Environmental Program: Border 2025**. Like programs before it, this program builds on the successes and framework of prior iterations and retains deep investment in community perspectives and priorities. Program Partners commit to further strengthen communication and cooperation to identify new sources of funding, implement best practices, strengthen existing partnerships and commit to finding new ones with the specific purpose of fulfilling the mission of the Border 2025 Program: to protect the environment and public health in the border region in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

# BORDER 2025 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## GOAL 1: REDUCE AIR POLLUTION

Air pollution continues to present a substantial public health and environmental risk in U.S.-Mexico border communities that experience elevated concentrations of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), ozone, and toxic air pollutants. Emissions from fossil-fuel-based electricity generation and other industrial sources, unpaved roads, agricultural and waste burning, diesel trucks, buses, and cars, including vehicles idling at ports-of-entry, are significant contributors to poor air quality along the border.

A number of cities near the U.S.-Mexico border share common airsheds; thus, activities in one city can directly affect the other, whether in the same country or across the border. As such, strategies and solutions to address air pollution along the border are more likely to be effective when they are developed and implemented binationally, with active engagement from community stakeholders, as well as local, state, federal, and Tribal authorities.

Border 2025 projects under Goal 1 should prioritize disproportionate air quality impacts and focus on activities in or near communities that do not meet one or more of the national ambient air quality standards, including, but not limited, to those within the following bi-national airsheds:

- San Diego/Tijuana
- Imperial County/Mexicali
- Ambos Nogales
- Yuma/San Luis Río Colorado
- Paso del Norte (El Paso/Ciudad Juárez/Sunland Park)

**Objective 1: Establish reliable and sustainably operated air monitoring networks and provide real-time access to air quality data.**

- **Objective 1a:** By 2023, increase knowledge-transfer and provide at least one training opportunity on performance standards and applications of low-cost air quality sensors.
- **Objective 1b:** By 2024, develop and implement a sustainable funding mechanism for air quality monitoring in at least one Mexican state.
- **Objective 1c:** By 2025, ensure that all air quality agencies operating one or more regulatory air quality monitors have developed a monitoring network plan (ideally in cooperation with other agencies in the same airshed) and a quality assurance project plan.

Air quality monitoring networks provide data essential to developing plans and assessing progress in reducing air pollution. This objective focuses on establishing reliable and sustainable air quality monitoring networks to inform the public and air quality planners about current conditions and trends. The purpose of this objective is to ensure that these monitoring networks provide real-time reliable data, respectively, to AirNow in the United States and to Mexico's National Information System on Air Quality (SINAICA), as well as historical data to air quality databases, such as the



U.S. EPA's Air Quality System (AQS) and the National Air Quality Report, consistent with national policies on data quality and reporting.

**Objective 2: Increase the quality and exchange of data from emissions inventories across the border and among federal, state, local, and Tribal agencies.**

- **Objective 2a:** By 2023, strengthen intergovernmental linkages, increase the exchange of information, and pursue greater harmonization when developing and improve national, state, and municipal emissions inventories, starting with at least two binational airsheds. The initial focus will be on “criteria” pollutants and their precursors (particulate matter, carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, volatile organic compounds, and ammonia).
- **Objective 2b:** By 2024, expand technical training to promote standardized approaches to emissions inventory development (including source measurement and testing) and maintenance.

Emissions inventories are necessary to help determine significant sources of air pollution and to inform regulatory actions. Emissions inventories are an essential input to models that estimate air quality and predict the effect of potential regulatory actions on air quality and human health. Reliable inventories can also be used to raise public awareness regarding sources of pollution along the border.

**Objective 3: Reduce vehicle emissions in the border region, including by establishing or strengthening programs that reduce the number of vehicles that do not comply with vehicle emissions standards.**

- **Objective 3a:** By 2024, increase cross-border (interagency, interstate, and international) access to databases that officials can use to verify that used vehicles meet emission standards.
- **Objective 3b:** By 2025, implement new vehicle inspection and maintenance programs or improve the existing programs, achieving at least 50% compliance in two or more Mexican states.
- **Objective 3c:** By 2025, reduce emissions from freight transportation in the border region by increasing information exchange and harmonization between U.S. EPA's *SmartWay* program and Mexico's *Transporte Limpio* program.

Vehicles remain a significant source of atmospheric emissions impacting border communities. Under this objective, the U.S. and Mexico seek to develop mutually beneficial strategies to reduce vehicle emissions in the border region, including, but not limited to: improved compliance with vehicle emission standards, establishment of and compliance with vehicle inspection and maintenance programs, increased data-sharing on used vehicle emissions testing, and strengthened Green Freight Programs such as *Transporte Limpio* (Mexico) and *SmartWay* (United States).

**Objective 4: Deploy strategies and technologies to reduce pollutant emissions and improve public health outcomes.**

- **Objective 4a:** By 2023, implement a program on air-quality-related health effects and/or a communication campaign on air-quality-related health risks and mitigation measures in at least one additional urban airshed.

- **Objective 4b:** By 2025, implement at least two policy-based (*e.g.*, multi-pollutant assessment; short-lived climate pollutants, Global Methane Initiative) or technology-based (*e.g.*, renewable energy incentives) programs targeting specific pollutants or sectoral emissions of local concern.
- **Objective 4c:** Implement additional emission reduction strategies consistent with applicable State Implementation Plans (SIPs) and PROAIRs.

A number of border city areas do not meet health-based air quality standards for particulate matter and/or ozone. The purpose of this objective is to deploy proven or innovative strategies or technologies to reduce these emissions and build public awareness of associated health risks.

## GOAL 2: IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

Watersheds along the U.S.-Mexico border region are shared binationally, with rivers flowing from one country to the other or flowing along the international boundary. Promoting beneficial water reuse and trash-free waters initiatives, reducing marine debris and protecting and restoring water quality in binational watersheds requires sustained collaborative binational, multi-jurisdictional planning efforts and actions.

The Border 2025 Water Goal builds upon the successes and lessons learned from the Border 2020 Program and aims to address the following significant challenges, which are exacerbated by high population growth rates, droughts and natural disasters:

- Lack of access to safe drinking water, which poses a significant threat to public health in border communities.
- Transboundary flows that create public health, environmental, and safety issues.
- Inadequate collection and treatment of wastewater, which contaminates surface waters and aquifers and threatens public health, the environment and economic growth.
- Inadequate operations and maintenance (O&M) at water and wastewater utilities.
- Lack of beneficial reuse of treated wastewater and conservation of water and energy.
- Excessive trash and sediment carried to rivers and oceans via stormwater.
- Inadequate public access to water quality data, which decreases the public's ability to know whether a waterbody is safe for recreational use.

The Border 2025 Water Goal addresses these challenges through the following five objectives:

**Objective 1: Improve Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure.** Ten drinking water and/or wastewater projects will be developed and certified by the North American Development Bank (NADB) Board of Directors by 2025 under the Border Water Infrastructure Program.

- **Objective 1a:** Increase access to safe drinking water and wastewater treatment in underserved communities.
- **Objective 1b:** Reduce discharges of untreated wastewater into the oceans and transboundary rivers such as those in the Tijuana River, New River, Santa Cruz River and the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo watersheds.

**Objective 2: Improve O&M of Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure.**

- **Objective 2a:** Ensure that infrastructure projects funded by the U.S. or Mexico have adequate O&M reserves and long-term planning.
- **Objective 2b:** Build capacity at water utilities through training and programs that improve the following:
  - Asset management.
  - Wastewater pretreatment (treatment of industrial wastewater discharged to a public wastewater treatment plant).
  - Operational, managerial and financial management.



**Metrics:**

- At least two Border Water Infrastructure Program projects will have an Asset Management component by 2023
- 100% of Border Water Infrastructure Program wastewater projects will include pre-treatment terms and conditions by 2024.
- Three training programs will be implemented by 2025, such as, borderwide utility management, peer-to-peer utility assistance in Nogales, and financial/managerial/technical utility training along the border.

**Objective 3: Promote beneficial reuse of treated wastewater and conservation of water and energy.** 100% of Border Water Infrastructure Program projects selected for development will include an assessment of water reuse opportunities, if appropriate by 2025.

- **Objective 3a:** Assess opportunities to fund wastewater reuse projects through the infrastructure program, complying with current regulations.
- **Objective 3b:** Develop at least one wastewater reuse pilot project, or one utility-driven water/energy audit.

**Objective 4: Implement projects to prevent and reduce the levels of trash and sediment from entering high priority binational watersheds.** Projects that prevent/reduce marine litter should primarily focus on preventing waste at the source through improvements to solid waste management systems, education campaigns, and monitoring as well as reducing trash from entering the aquatic environment through the capture of litter using river booms in known watershed litter hot spots. If dedicated funding sources become available, at least one project in Tijuana River, New River, Rio Grande, and Santa Cruz River watersheds will be implemented to address trash or sediment by 2025.

**Objective 5: Improve access to transboundary water quality data.**

- **Objective 5a:** Ensure sewage spill notification protocols are in place for all communities affected by transboundary flows of untreated sewage. A sewage runoff model will be developed for Tijuana by 2021. Spill notification protocols will be developed in three high priority watersheds by 2025.
- **Objective 5b:** Increase awareness of beach contamination from marine debris and untreated sewage through modeling, monitoring (should focus on sources and types of marine debris) and special studies.
- **Objective 5c:** Ensure that U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) website displays timely information on water quality in high-priority watersheds including the Lower Rio Grande/Bravo, the New River, the Santa Cruz River and the Tijuana River.
- **Objective 5d:** Continue the work of the binational water quality improvement plan as part of the Lower Rio Grande Water Quality Initiative in the Lower Rio Grande below Falcon International Dam.

### **GOAL 3: Promote sustainable materials and waste management, and clean sites**

The border region faces significant challenges that threaten its ability to achieve clean, sustainable communities. Increased trade, manufacturing and population growth in the border region has led to increased waste; yet, the current waste management structure is not adequate to meet border communities' increasing needs. Solid wastes can include materials generated by business (commercial and industrial waste), building materials (construction and demolition debris) and residents (municipal solid waste). Improperly managed waste results in air, water and land pollution. To ensure the future health and safety of the communities within the border region, we need to move away from a linear approach of make, use and dispose, to a circular, life-cycle approach, reducing waste and optimizing resource use.

Promoting sustainable materials management and resource efficiency practices throughout the border region provides opportunities for partnerships, innovation and job creation. It is necessary to collaborate at all levels of government, communicate with community stakeholders and collaborate with the private sector to apply limited resources to reduce pollution and prevent adding to legacy contamination in the region.

Over the next five years, the U.S. and Mexico will work collaboratively to address the following challenges in the border region:

- Lack of adequate planning programs that establish strategies to minimize waste, promote safe materials reuse, develop efficient collection systems, support secondary materials markets and composting infrastructure, reduce overall disposal in open dumps, and improve disposal site operations;
- Absence of adequate waste characterization and measurement of generation, disposal, illegal dumping, recycling and composting data to support the development and tracking of waste reduction programs;
- Limited knowledge and experience in identifying traditional and non-traditional financing mechanisms and resources to establish and implement a holistic solid waste management system;
- Inadequate infrastructure and services to manage trash and other solid waste, especially plastics, which when left unmanaged can reach shared waters contributing to marine litter.
- Environmental, social and economic impacts of indiscriminate dumping and contaminated sites resulting in high remedial costs and addressing the limited implementation and enforcement of current laws.

**Objective 1: By 2025, share information and experiences on sustainable materials management and circular economy practices with local and state-level institutions.**

Increasing institutional capacity for resource efficiency and sustainable management of materials in the border region will facilitate incorporating these practices into existing and new programs. To achieve this objective, traditional, web and social media communication, community-based

outreach, web-based workshops, and pilot projects through public-private partnerships will be considered to promote sustainable practices, measurement, reduction, and proper management of priority waste streams. This will also include educational outreach efforts that engage communities, NGOs, local, state, and tribal or indigenous governments. These activities will support and leverage respective national and international efforts to reduce waste and develop better collection, separation, recycling and composting practices.

**Objective 2: Identify priority waste streams and develop sustainable materials management and circular economy practices that strengthen their respective market value.**

- **Objective 2a. Identify and measure priority waste streams by 2022.** Each region of the border presents different economic, social and cultural situations, resulting in changing waste streams which require innovative, specific strategies to be managed effectively. Border 2025 task forces should identify and measure their priority waste streams and identify opportunities to reduce illegal dumping and trans-boundary trash to maximize cost effective material recovery. A few priority waste streams to consider include organic waste, plastic waste, used electronics and e-waste, construction and demolition debris and scrap tires.
- **Objective 2b. Develop strategies or trainings to reduce illegal dumping, maximize material recovery, and promote environmentally sound disposal practices by 2025.** Based on the priority waste streams identified, this objective includes the development of sustainable demonstration projects through public-private partnerships or infrastructure investments. Project goals should target reducing dumping, improving safe reuse and collection of materials for recycling and composting, and/or developing markets for secondary materials. For example, to reduce marine litter, a program priority, collaboration should occur between non-governmental, state and federal entities to develop strategies to reduce land-based plastic trash and litter and emphasis could be placed on the commonly littered plastic items. These strategies will align with national and international marine litter reduction initiatives. The number of priority waste streams addressed through strategies or trainings will be dependent on available funding and resources.

**Objective 3: By 2025, improve knowledge at every level of government (federal, state, local) to improve solid waste disposal site operations.**

Improvements to solid waste management and disposal practices along the border region are necessary to improve the quality of life and protect the surrounding populations and environment. Mismanaged waste, especially open dumping, can contribute to surface and groundwater pollution near dumpsites, public health threats, and are a health and safety concern for informal sector workers. Additionally, if not properly managed, landfills trapping methane and liquids pose a risk of heating and catching on fire. Landfill heating events lead to fires causing air pollution, infrastructure damage, and expensive response and cleanup operations. These are two important areas of improvement for disposal of solid waste along the border region.

- **Objective 3a: By 2023, identify strategies to reduce illegal dumping and promote clean sites.** To achieve this objective, countries will share economic, technical, compliance, social aspects and lessons-learned from successful efforts to transition from open dumping to

materials recovery and disposal in sanitary landfills. Activities should consider strategies such as private-public partnerships, strengthening enforcement to prevent open dumping, improving landfill operation practices to ensure leachate collection to protect groundwater sources, and promoting opportunities for more formal job training to ensure the safety of informal sector workers. The strategy should also reduce landfill disposal of recyclable or compostable materials to promote sustainable or circular management.

- **Objective 3b: By 2025, identify strategies to reduce landfill fires.** To achieve this objective, the regions will explore strategies or trainings to prevent the occurrence of these heating events and fires through actions such as implementing programs to reduce organic waste and improve gas collection in landfills. The number of trainings conducted would be dependent on available funding and resources.

**Objective 4: On an annual basis, implement the Binational Consultative Mechanism on sharing information on border area hazardous waste facilities, spent lead acid battery and electronics recycling facilities.**

The Consultative Mechanism is a binational notification mechanism that has been in practice since the early 2000s. Spent lead acid battery and electronics recycling facilities were added to the notification mechanism as agreed upon at the 2015 National Coordinators meeting. The Consultative Mechanism was developed in recognition of the public concern on both sides of the border regarding waste storage, treatment and disposal facilities. This inclusion is a priority under Border 2025 to affirm its value to both countries and interest in maintaining this notification mechanism.

## GOAL 4: IMPROVE JOINT PREPARATION FOR INCIDENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The La Paz Agreement initiated a history of cooperation between Mexico and the United States, the objective of which is to preserve a “healthy environment for the long-term economic and social well-being of the present and future generations of each country, as well as the international community.” The La Paz Agreement establishes the general regulatory framework in which both countries agreed to prevent, reduce or eliminate sources of air, water and soil pollution. After its adoption, five cooperative agreements (Annexes) were established. Annex II of 1985 establishes cooperative measures to prepare for and respond to pollution from hazardous substances. It also defines the need for a Mexico-United States Joint Contingency Plan (JCP) that was developed in 1988 and signed in 1999. To date, the JCP has been updated and signed twice, first in 2008 and most recently in 2017. The JCP provided the basis for the Binational Joint Contingency Plans of the 15 Sister Cities situated along the border.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Policy Forum, as well as the Joint Response Team (JRT) is co-chaired in Mexico by the Federal Attorney of Environmental Protection (PROFEPA) under SEMARNAT, and the National Civil Protection Coordination, of the Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection (SSPP), and in the United States by the U.S. EPA Office Emergency Management (OEM). Additional JRT partners include representatives from other U.S. and Mexican federal agencies, including state, tribal and local offices responsible for emergency prevention, preparedness, and response in the border region.

### **Objective 1: Update the Joint Mexico-United States Contingency Plan (JCP) and evaluate the emergency notification system along the border of Mexico and the United States.**

- **Objective 1a:** In 2021, the JCP notification system should be reviewed and updated to assess its operability and incorporate possible protocol changes and new technological developments.
- **Objective 1b:** By the year 2022, a revised and updated version of the JCP will be finalized, including any changes and / or modifications of the participating parties (names, affiliations, etc.) of the governmental structure of both countries.
- **Objective 1c:** As part of the evaluation of the operability of the JCP notification system, each country should conduct at least 40 annual chemical emergency notification drills through the National Center of Communication (CENACOM) in Mexico, and the National Response Center (NRC) in the United States.

To ensure proper and rapid response to emergencies, the Mexico – U.S. Joint Contingency Plan must be updated regularly to include the most recent advancements in response notifications, technological capabilities, and training objectives. Under this objective, the U.S. and Mexico aim to complete the Mexico - U.S. Joint Contingency Plan to include updated emergency response protocols and to regularly test these protocols for effectiveness in case of emergency.

### **Objective 2: Review, update and evaluate the Sister City Joint Contingency Plans (SCJCPs).**

- **Objective 2a:** By 2021, a study of the 15 SCJCPs should be completed utilizing existing risk analysis data. This study must consider, among other aspects, the SCJCP’s content and scope.



- **Objective 2b:** By the year 2022, a joint study should be carried out in the border region aimed at adjusting the number of Border Sister Cities that are members of the JCP.
- **Objective 2c:** Based on the results of the sister city JCP Study, the updated SCJCP's must be promoted to the corresponding stakeholders (Regional Groups, NADB, etc.) during the Border 2025 Environmental Program. The actions carried out in this objective will be aimed at achieving the update of the 15 SCJCP's between 2020 to 2025.
- **Objective 2d:** In order to evaluate the SCJCP, each country must conduct at least three annual field drills in the Sister Cities located in the Mexico - United States border region, ensuring a joint response is carried out. Prior to conducting the drills, the participating staff must be trained through the delivery of binational seminars.

Like the JCP, each of the Sister City Joint Contingency Plans must be reviewed and updated at least once every five years. These Plans should incorporate any localized risks associated with potential hazardous chemical emergencies, as well as lessons learned in the binational drills. In the future, the use of risk analysis and existing data will help focus technical materials, capacity building drills, and cross-border feasibility in areas where they are needed most. Improving the standardization of hazardous materials teams also known as HAZMAT and ensuring their proper equipment will ensure efficient and safe responses. Full-scale exercises spanning the border are crucial to establishing response-ready teams and maintaining skillsets and knowledge. Where applicable, Tribal groups will be incorporated into Sister City plans.

**Objective 3: Strengthen the training of emergency response personnel through the development of in-person or online training courses by creating a certificate of skills recognized by corresponding authorities. Additionally, develop and disseminate technical support material to help inform the public in case of emergency.**

- **Objective 3a:** In coordination with the Regions, a Sister City Training Program should be developed during the year 2021 and implemented throughout the Border 2025 program. The Training Program should focus on course offerings that result in certifications to enhance the competency of emergency responders.
- **Objective 3b:** At least three annual seminars, workshops and/or coordinated courses should be conducted between the two countries on topics including chemical substances, risk and consequences analysis, and emergency management.
- **Objective 3c:** In order to complement the training opportunities, audiovisual material and online courses focused on prevention and response to chemical emergencies should be made available at the border.

Technical training for personnel responding to time-sensitive hazardous substance emergencies improves the safety, quality, and speed of the response. Improving access to certified trainings will help Sister Cities develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities of their response teams and distinguish personnel who are trained and certified in specific response capacities. Given the potential for a cross-border response, it is necessary to standardize the knowledge of the personnel of both countries involved, both in technical and administrative aspects. Coordinating training across the Mexico – U.S. border will also strengthen communication, trust, and knowledge of responders. In order to guarantee the competence of responders, training courses should be part of a certification program. This program should include technical material that complements the knowledge acquired through the courses in the certification program.

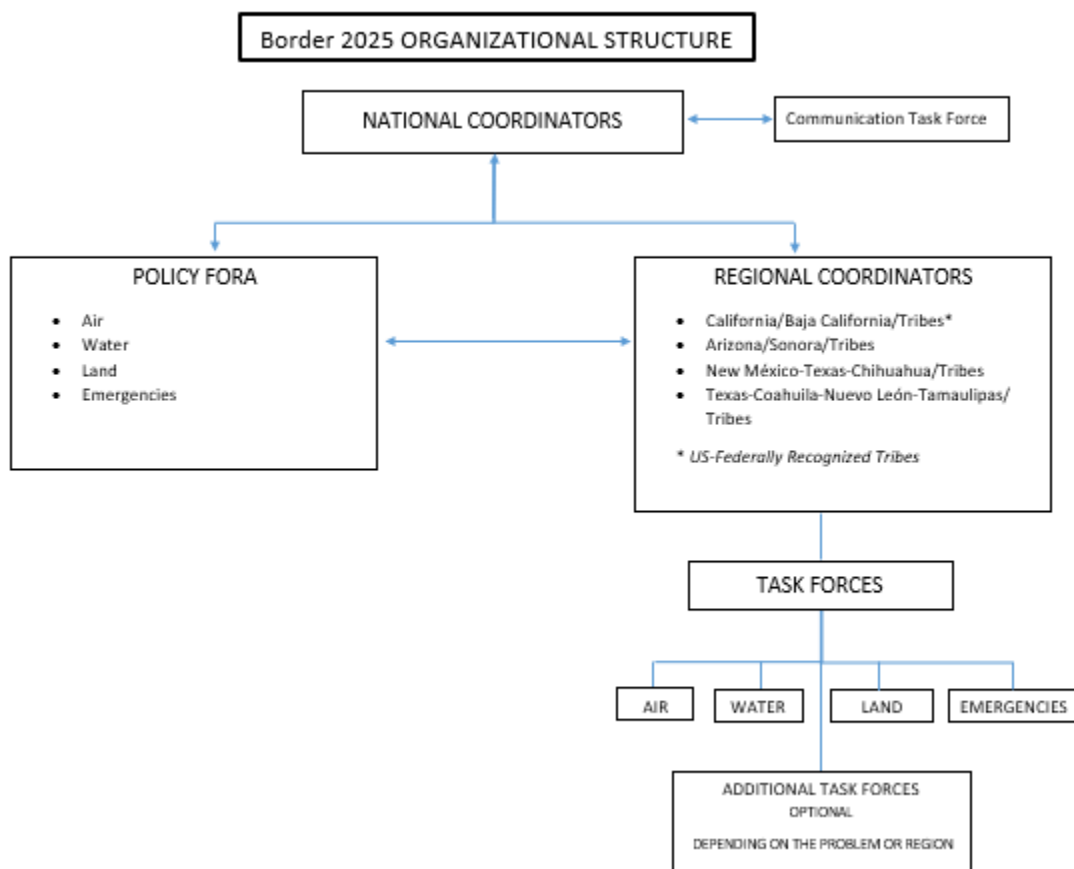
**Objective 4: Design and implement the guidelines and protocols to ensure rapid, safe, and legal passage of personnel and materials across the Mexico – United States border in emergency response situations.**

- **Objective 4a:** By 2021, an action plan should be developed to address respective liability coverage of each country to facilitate the movement of people and materials across the border during drills or emergency events.
- **Objective 4b:** By 2022, each country should complete a report on the status of transboundary movement of human and material resources during emergencies, as well as the current and future actions that are being carried out.

Emergencies involving hazardous materials along the Mexico – U.S. border require rapid, often binational response. However, existing security at the border can impede the movement of equipment and personnel. Establishing transboundary agreements and improving the process for first responders to move personnel and equipment through checkpoints could facilitate this process. Inter-agency coordination (e.g., Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Department of State (DOS), Department of the Interior (DOI), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other agencies) will be critical for establishing functional agreements. Additionally, cross-border insurance policies for vehicle liability, notification protocol, pre-approving personnel, and cost analysis/equipment standardization could improve response time and first responder capabilities.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The U.S. EPA Office of International and Tribal Affairs and SEMARNAT's International Affairs Coordinating Unit serve as National Coordinators to provide guidance and oversight to the Border 2025 coordinating bodies (i.e., the Policy Fora, Regional Coordinators, and Task Forces). These coordinating bodies work on border issues bringing to bear their diverse and complementary perspectives. The function and role of the coordinating bodies is further explained in this section.



## National Coordinators

Consistent with the terms of the La Paz Agreement, the National Coordinators from the United States and Mexico, respectively, manage overall program implementation and ensure cooperation, coordination and communication among all coordinating bodies. Although the coordinating bodies have autonomy, the National Coordinators promote overall progress toward program goals. They assist the coordinating bodies in maintaining focus on binational and transboundary environmental and public health issues and adherence to the program's mission and guiding principles.

The National Coordinators or their representative shall meet at least annually, in person or thru video teleconference, with the Policy Fora and Regional Coordinators to take stock of on-going



progress and set program direction with program partners. They will also encourage participation from task force members and other relevant agencies, as appropriate, and assist in identifying and leveraging funding sources for binational efforts and projects.

### **Policy Fora**

Policy Fora are goal-specific and focus on issues that are borderwide or multi-regional (identified as a priority by two or more Regional Coordinators), primarily federal in nature (requiring direct, high-level, and sustained leadership by federal program partners in the United States and Mexico) and require broad policy considerations. Policy Fora identify priority borderwide policy issues and programs that can most effectively be addressed through a federally led effort, relying on input from National Coordinators, Regional Coordinators, and Task Forces. The goals of this dialogue is to ensure continuity between national policies and regional projects and to ensure that federal policy for the U.S.-Mexico border is implemented or administered with opportunity for review and comment by state and tribal governments, in addition to providing an opportunity for input, advice and support from NGOs and the public.

Each Policy Fora has a federal co-chair from the United States and Mexico. Federal co-chairs will be senior level managers at the U.S. EPA and SEMARNAT headquarters offices who can most effectively influence national policy needed to implement programs to address the following topics:

- Reduce Air Pollution;
- Improve Water Quality;
- Promote Sustainable Materials, Waste Management and Clean Sites; and
- Improve Joint Preparation for Incidents of Environmental Pollution of Hazardous Substances.

In addition to the general roles and responsibilities described above, Policy Fora should:

- Advise National Coordinators on borderwide concerns with input from Regional Coordinators and Task Forces;
- Address issues and opportunities to support implementation of goals and objectives through task forces;
- Identify and prioritize policy and technical issues of border-wide, binational and federal importance;
- Provide input to Regional Coordinators on borderwide actions to include in regional Action Plans and oversee and track implementation of border-wide actions to advance the borderwide objectives in their respective goals and ensure consistency with federal priorities;
- Address borderwide policy and technical issues;
- Identify and target resources in support of regionally based projects;
- Promote participation from each Policy Forum in Task Force meetings on topics germane to the Forum, when needed; and
- Promote and ensure coordination with the Regional Coordinators and stakeholders.

Policy Fora meetings will promote broad-based stakeholder participation, including non-governmental and community-based organizations, academic institutions, local, state, and tribal

representatives, and binational organizations from both countries with expertise in the given subject area whenever possible. Every effort will be made to facilitate full participation in the border-wide Policy Fora's work, including access to informational and decision documents, including attendance in person or virtually based on available financial resources. However, the border-wide scope of Policy Fora may prevent extensive local participation, and the confidential nature of some national policy issues a Policy Forum meeting may require that some sessions be closed to the public.

## **Regional Coordinators**

Regional Coordinators are goal and geographically focused and emphasize regional public health and environmental issues. They coordinate regional activities and support efforts of local Task Forces. They ensure that Task Forces include the appropriate state environmental cabinet officials from the U.S. and Mexico and a representative of federally recognized tribes as selected by participating tribes in the area. Regional Coordinators will determine what additional mechanisms will be necessary to coordinate with federally recognized tribes in the U.S. and indigenous communities in Mexico within their respective regions. Where adopted binationally, these mechanisms should ensure that interested federally recognized tribes in the U.S. and indigenous communities in Mexico are fully informed and allowed full participation, including leadership opportunities in Border 2025 efforts within their communities.

The U.S. Regional Coordinators are the U.S. EPA's politically appointed Regional Administrators (Regions 6 and 9) who can delegate some or all functions into their organizations. Mexico's Regional Coordinators are SEMARNAT's Representative Offices at a corresponding border state designated by SEMARNAT through UCAI. In the Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo León-Tamaulipas area, SEMARNAT will designate through UCAI a Representative Office to participate in the leadership role.

The Regional Coordinators represent their region at the Border 2025 National Coordinators' meeting and in other forms of communication with partner organizations, they focus on regional environmental and recommend to other coordinating bodies on issues beyond regional scope that need to be addressed by Border 2025 Policy Fora. When necessary, they may also help facilitate projects by convening local, state, tribal governments, the public, academia, and NGOs.

The Regional Coordinators represent the following regions:

- California-Baja California
- Arizona-Sonora
- New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua
- Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo León-Tamaulipas

In addition to the general roles and responsibilities described above, Regional Coordinators:

- Create local Task Forces to advance Border 2025 guiding principles, goals and objectives;
- Compile and approve regional action plans, with input from the Policy Fora and regional task forces, to send to the National Coordinators;

- Monitor and sanction Task Forces' progress;
- Select Task Force Co-Leaders that may be rotated, replaced, and/or reappointed at their discretion;
- Promote and build consensus on priorities with the Policy Fora and stakeholders in order to ensure success in meeting the objectives of the program;
- Facilitate communication among coordinating bodies to avoid duplication of efforts; and
- Promote and assure that Task Forces have the organizational, resource, and logistical means for carrying out meetings (e.g., develop agendas and schedules, secure meeting venues or have virtual meeting capabilities, provide translation services, etc.)

The Regional Coordinators should support the Task Forces in their region. They should encourage participation from local representatives of both sides of the border as well as from binational organizations, community organizations and civil society, academic institutions and the private sector in Task Force meetings. In addition, the Regional Coordinators should promote contributions to the Task Forces from other federal, tribal, state, and local governments, as well as from key organizations responsible for the environment, health, natural resources and emergency response.

### **Task Forces**

Task Forces serve as a mechanism for border stakeholders to collaborate on studies and projects, share information, raise concerns to government officials, and learn about ongoing efforts in the border region. Task Force leaders will be appointed by the Regional Coordinators for their region and may represent interested local communities; relevant local, state, federal and tribal governments; binational organizations; non-governmental and community-based organizations; academic institutions; and the private sector as appropriate.

Within the four regions, Regional Coordinators may establish a Task Force for each of the four Border 2025 Goals and for other topics with a geographic focus, as they deem necessary.

In addition to the general roles and responsibilities described above, Task Force Co-leaders shall:

- Oversee the creation of Action Plans and track and report on progress in implementing the Plans;
- Act as a spokesperson for the Task Force and be informed to answer questions from the public, stakeholders and/or media;
- Convene a Task Force meeting at least annually, develop agendas, locate potential meetings venue or convene virtually, request provision of simultaneous interpretation services and facilitate additional focused group discussions, and facilitate access to informational and other documents, as necessary;
- Promote consensus in identifying environmental issues within the Task Force to address Border 2025 goals and objectives;
- Attend meetings convened by the Regional Coordinators and share information about the Task Force's progress;

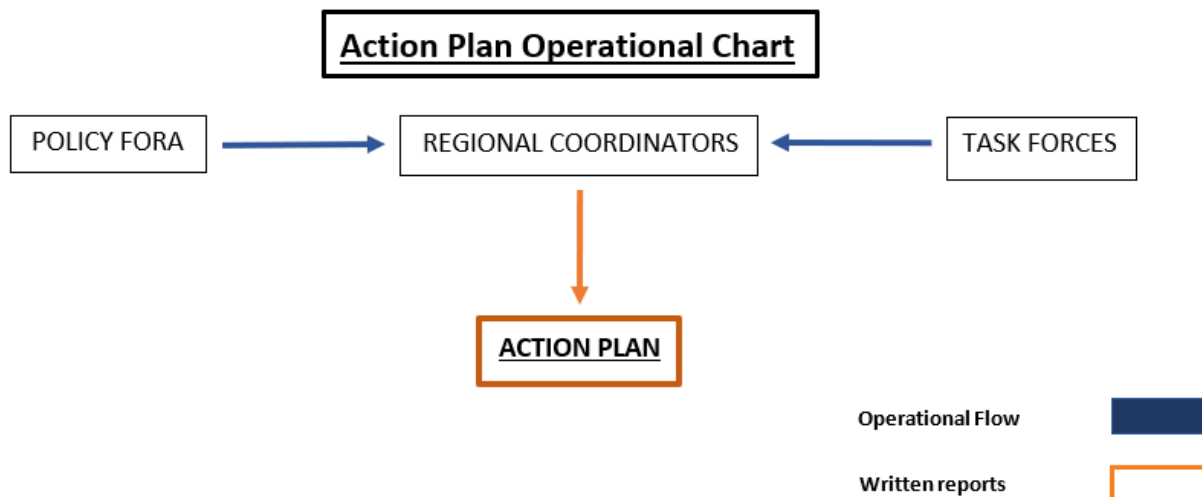
- Ensure ample representation of regional specialists and stakeholders at meetings and Task Force activities in order to plan and implement projects;
- Serve as a technical advisor to the local, state, and federal authorities on issues in which the Task Force and the actions plans cover;
- Serve as liaison between tribal, local, state, and federal participants to effectively leverage resources to achieve program goals and to communicate the priorities and strategies to the Task Force members/stakeholders and the staff of federal and state agencies; and
- Facilitate communication with other coordinating bodies to avoid duplication of efforts.

### **Communication Task Force**

Communication has been and continues to be an important aspect within past and present border environmental programs. As part of strengthening communication efforts within Border 2025, the National Coordinators will develop a communication strategy to ensure effective and timely communication and engagement with the public, program partners and stakeholders. To assist with the development and implementation of the communication strategy, the National Coordinators will appoint a Communication Task Force consisting of staff from the U.S. EPA and SEMARNAT.

Border 2025 will strengthen its ability to communicate program successes, outputs, and outcomes while seeking input from stakeholders and communities on pressing issues. To accomplish this, the Communication Task Force is expected to provide input and recommendations to the National Coordinators on the development, implementation, and revision of effective communication strategies. The National Coordinators will play a prominent role in implementing the strategy to ensure that communication among partners is sustained and promoted throughout the duration of the Border 2025 Program.

# ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY



## Action Plans

The coordinating bodies (Policy Foras, Task forces) will provide input to the Regional Coordinators whom will prepare Action Plans to identify the projects and activities that will be implemented to meet the goals and objectives of the program. Action Plans should include funded activities, timeframes, expected outputs and outcomes and progress status that support and measure progress towards achieving the program's goals and objectives. The Task Forces will recommend projects and/or activities describing the projects within their geographic area and purview. The Policy Fora will develop projects and /or activities for border-wide projects and policies within the scope of their Goal.

The Regional Coordinators will compile all planned activities into regional Action Plans, based on the Task Force planned activities in their region and applicable portions of the planned activities developed by the Policy Fora, ensuring consistency with the goals and objectives of the program. The National Coordinators will review and approve the regional Action Plans. Action plans in 2021 and 2023 are anticipated.

## Highlight Reports

A report highlighting progress towards achieving the Border 2025 goals and objectives will be prepared in 2023 and 2025. The highlight reports will summarize the status and progress on implementing the Action Plans, including policy and regional projects. Consequently, they will serve as a resource to share knowledge, transfer best practices, evaluate program effectiveness, and to identify priority projects and efforts.

The highlight reports will be made available to the public through the Border programs webpage and/or other available media. The final report in 2025 will capture program accomplishments and will be used as a basis for future development of environmental programs in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

### **Operational Guidelines**

Operational Guidelines have been developed outlining standard operating and reporting procedures for coordinating bodies under Border 2025 to ensure maximum transparency and accountability. These guidelines can be found in the program's website. In addition to these operational guidelines, more detailed procedures may be created by Regional Coordinators to specify guidelines pertaining to Task Force operations.

The mechanisms identified in the Operational Guidelines are intended to optimize the use of limited resources, promote and enhance information-sharing, and improve overall coordination and teamwork among the federal governments, the border states, U.S. federally recognized tribes and Mexican indigenous communities, and other border stakeholders.

To ensure transparency and foster information exchange, the coordinating bodies disseminate information regarding their activities and progress on specific projects by posting information to websites and sending relevant information on program listservs, through print media and public meetings, as well as by participating in environmental fairs and environmental education programs, as appropriate.

All coordinating bodies should minimally conform to the Operational Guidelines to maximize public participation, to provide public access to information, and to strengthen the overall program. Regional Coordinators and Policy Fora facilitate participation of all interested border stakeholders. U.S. EPA and SEMARNAT work with program partners to extend the use of existing information tools, including regional newsletters and bulletins, the Border 2025 website, the e-mail information service (NADBnet and Constant Contact, webinars, key project databases, and other means of disseminating information on Border 2025 progress to the public and border stakeholders.

### **Stakeholder Engagement and Participation**

In-person and/or virtual meetings of coordinating bodies are to be held as often as necessary to meet their respective objectives, but no less than once per calendar year. In person meetings are to be held in communities within the U.S.-Mexico border region, alternating as much as possible between the U.S. and Mexico and including simultaneous interpretation services. All meetings are open, providing the public an opportunity to listen and comment.

- **Public notice** of these meetings, including agendas in both English and Spanish, will be widely disseminated in advance prior to meetings. Notification of meetings should be comprehensive



and could include, as resources allow, posting on the NADBnet listserv, Constant Contact, written notices (flyers, letters, etc.), community calendars, press releases, and social media.

- **Meeting agendas** may include presentations on borderwide and regional efforts including status of ongoing projects (as appropriate), identification of priorities, and leveraging of internal and external resources to implement priorities.
- **Meeting materials** such as agendas and handouts will be made available in English and Spanish.
- **Translation Services and Virtual Meeting Options** may be included to facilitate the communication between community stakeholders along the U.S.-Mexico border region.

## Communication

Strategic communication is an essential element of past and present U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Programs. In order to ensure effective and timely communication and engagement with the public, program partners and stakeholders. To assist with the development of the strategy, the National Coordinators will appoint a Communication Task Force consisting of staff from the U.S. EPA and SEMARNAT. The National Coordinators will play a prominent role in implementing the strategy to ensure that communication among partners is sustained and promoted throughout the duration of the Border 2025 Program.

The strategy will strengthen the ability of the Border 2025 program to communicate program successes, outputs, and outcomes while seeking input from stakeholders and communities on pressing issues. The communication strategy will be updated regularly, taking into consideration input from Border partners, to ensure that efforts are streamlined and effective. At a minimum, the communication strategy will address the following components:

- Establishing and maintaining a borderwide electronic communication database/listserv service as an outreach resource;
- Developing Border 2025 Program report(s) on achievements and accomplishments (i.e. Highlight Report); and
- Maintaining regular communication with program partners to identify unmet communication needs and identifying next steps.
- Updating, maintaining and managing program related websites

Border 2025 will make available, to the extent possible, all program materials in both English and Spanish and is committed to promote the program's achievements and progress and will ensure that communication is binational, consistent and uniform.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>AQS</b>	<b>U.S. EPA's Air Quality System</b>
<b>CBP</b>	<b>Customs and Border Protection</b>
<b>DOI</b>	<b>Department of Interior</b>
<b>DOS</b>	<b>Department of State</b>
<b>FEMA</b>	<b>Federal Emergency Management Agency</b>
<b>HAZMAT</b>	<b>Hazardous Materials</b>
<b>IBWC</b>	<b>International Boundary and Water Commission</b>
<b>JCP</b>	<b>Joint Contingency Plan</b>
<b>JRT</b>	<b>Joint Response Team</b>
<b>NADB</b>	<b>North American Development Bank</b>
<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Non-Governmental Organizations</b>
<b>OEM</b>	<b>U.S. EPA Office of Emergency Management</b>
<b>PM<sub>10</sub></b>	<b>Particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter</b>
<b>PM<sub>2.5</sub></b>	<b>Particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter (fine particulates)</b>
<b>PROAIRES</b>	<b>Program to Improve Air Quality in Mexico</b>
<b>PROFEPA</b>	<b>Office of the Federal Attorney General for Environmental Protection (Mexico)</b>
<b>SCJCPs</b>	<b>Sister City Joint Contingency Plans</b>
<b>SEMARNAT</b>	<b>Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources (Mexico)</b>
<b>SINAICA</b>	<b>Mexico's National Information System on Air Quality</b>
<b>SIPs</b>	<b>State Implementation Plans</b>



## LIST OF ACRONYMS (cont.)

<b>SSPP</b>	<b>Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection within Mexico's National Civil Protection Coordination</b>
<b>UCAI</b>	<b>Mexico's International Affairs Coordination Unit</b>
<b>U.S.EPA</b>	<b>United States Environmental Protection Agency</b>

## CONTACTS

For additional information on the Border 2025 Program please go to [www.epa.gov/Border2025](http://www.epa.gov/Border2025) and/or [www.semarnat.gob.mx/](http://www.semarnat.gob.mx/) or contact one of the following offices:

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